**2 Cents: Will a movement to ban high school football gain any traction?**

**Published: Thursday, June 14, 2012, 8:00 AM** By [JOHN TUSCANO, The Patriot-News](http://connect.pennlive.com/user/jtuscano/index.html)

Is the high school sports season officially wraps up with Friday’s PIAA Baseball and Softball Championships, here is some food for thought.

Banning high school football?

Before you spit out your orange juice or choke on that bowl of Frosted Flakes, we’re nowhere near something that drastic, but when I caught a story on phillyburbs.com this week where [a Council Rock school board member called for the banning of the sport](http://www.phillyburbs.com/news/local/courier_times_news/cr-board-member-calls-for-banning-hs-football/article_4dbb7595-770a-589f-bf45-797606569742.html), I spit out my morning cereal.

Patty Sexton, a Philadelphia public school teacher and school board member in the Council Rock School District, made the following comment in a Monday story that appeared on phillyburbs.com.

“It’s no longer appropriate for public institutions to fund gladiators. I am very concerned about putting these student-athletes in the position of getting a concussion,” Sexton said in the article.

“Football has gotten faster, harder and more dangerous with each passing year. I’m extremely scared we will eventually be sued over injuries suffered in sports.”

While there is some truth in Sexton’s comments, is this the direction we should be headed?

Is there not an element of danger in a lot of sports?

Getting hit in the head with a baseball, a softball or a soccer ball are all plausible risks when a student-athlete takes the field.

What about a cheerleader that falls from a teammates shoulders? A sprinter that trips over a hurdle?

While those situations come nowhere near the potential severity of injury playing football, particularly when it comes to concussions, wouldn’t we be setting a disturbing precedent if school districts suddenly became sympathetic to banning high school football because it’s too dangerous?

I think Sexton’s comments mean well, but it really comes off as an overreaction.

And when you succumb to a knee jerk reaction whenever something unfortunate happens, it’s a dangerous path to travel down.

Sexton can’t be the only one that shares this line of thinking, how many others are out there that think that football is too violent, that cars go too fast and that your son or daughter’s coach yells too loud.?

If you think Sexton’s comments should be laughed off as no big deal, perhaps you’re right.

But that’s how these types of movements start, one dissenting voice and one sympathetic ear in a position of high authority.

I’m starting to think Ed Rendell was right.

Maybe we are becoming [a nation of wussies](http://www.pennlive.com/midstate/index.ssf/2010/12/rendell_fears_were_becoming_a.html).

Article 2:

# CR board member calls for banning HS football

# English, Chris. Phillyburbs.com. Retrieved on 10/8/12 from: <http://www.phillyburbs.com/news/local/courier_times_news/cr-board-member-calls-for-banning-hs-football/article_4dbb7595-770a-589f-bf45-797606569742.html>

Comparing high school football to the gladiator fights of ancient times, Council Rock school board member Patty Sexton has called for banning the sport at the high school level.

Sexton, also a Philadelphia public school teacher, made her comments late at Thursday night’s Council Rock board meeting.

She said continuing the sport at schools funded by the general taxpayer base is inappropriate. It has become too dangerous and carries too much of a risk of lasting effects from injuries, especially concussions, Sexton said.

“It’s no longer appropriate for public institutions to fund gladiators,” she said. “I am very, very concerned about putting these student-athletes in the position of getting a concussion. Football has gotten faster, harder and more dangerous with each passing year. I’m extremely scared we will eventually be sued over injuries suffered in sports.”

It doesn’t make sense for publicly funded educational institutions to continue offering a sport that by its very nature includes physical and often violent contact on every play, Sexton said.

She said she also has concerns with other contact sports in high schools, and mentioned specifically the risks involved in “heading” the ball in soccer, but her main emphasis was on football because she believes it is the most dangerous sport played in high schools.

“We wouldn’t dream of putting our kids in a vehicle without a seat belt, but we put them out on the field and cheer for them,” Sexton said. “Our mission is to grow brains, not destroy them.”

If high school age children want to play football, they can do so with the consent of and funding from their parents in a “community-type” setting away from school, said Sexton.

She said high schools are not immune to the problems encountered in the National Football League, where concussions and their lasting effects have become an increasingly hot issue.

A group of 2,000 former NFL players is suing the league over the long-term effects of concussions and other head injuries. Multiple concussions might have played a role in the suicides of former NFL stars Junior Seau and Dave Duerson, legal and medical authorities have said.

Former NFL quarterbacks Troy Aikman and Kurt Warner have said they would think twice about letting their children play football.

According to the website [momsteam.com](http://momsteam.com), which bills itself as a source for parents of youth athletes, approximately 67,000 kids are diagnosed with concussions in high school football every year. The sport has almost twice the rate of concussions as any other high school sport, the website added.